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GOVERNOR SUBMITS BUDGET

Governor Jim Doyle introduced his 2003-05 state biennial budget proposal. The comprehensive plan is based on a set of five priorities — all focused on eliminating the state budget deficit and getting Wisconsin back on track:

1. Not raise taxes;
2. Distribute budget cuts fairly;
3. Protect education, health care, key local services and the environment;
4. Reduce spending and make government more efficient; and
5. Do it once and do it right.

With these goals in mind, the Governor proposed transferring \$500 million from the Transportation Fund to the state's General Fund to support the transportation components of the shared revenue and school aids programs. Much of this transfer will be backfilled by bonding revenues to ensure the highway improvement program is stable.

Budget includes transportation initiatives

Governor Doyle's plan also includes a number of funding initiatives for transportation programs:

- ◆ The budget proposal allocates a total of \$244 million in state funds to reconstruct the Marquette Interchange. The funding allows reconstruction to occur over a four-year period beginning in 2005.
- ◆ The Governor proposes increases of 2.5% per year for local transportation aid programs, including General Transportation Aids and transit.
- ◆ The Governor's proposal also increases funding for state highway maintenance and operations by 2.5% per year.
- ◆ The budget bill preserves funding for Amtrak service between Milwaukee and Chicago.

- ◆ The proposal allocates \$400,000 of state funds to match federal funding for preliminary engineering of a commuter rail corridor between the cities of Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee.

- ◆ The budget calls on the state to enact a .08 blood alcohol limit to help prevent loss of life from accidents caused by drunk drivers, while at the same time ensuring that Wisconsin receives its fair share of federal highway funds.

- ◆ The Governor calls for a state match to a federal grant of \$804,600 to implement key provisions of the federal Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999.

Summaries and tables for the proposed state budget are on-line at www.doa.state.wi.us/debf/execbudget.asp.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar 31 / Apr 1 - Aviation conference, Middleton

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